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PAGE 14

Minimum wage hike to be announced, sources say

Ontario's Liberal gov't will raise the $10.25/hour wage retroactively to 2010 PAGE 4

Manitobans pull together after pipeline explosion

Many of the 4,000 residents in province's southeast without heat for third day PAGE 6

Ice dance greats plan to savour Sochi

Local duo Tessa Virtue and Scott Moir say they're going to close the final chapter of their careers in style PAGE 17

A Zamboni crosses the ice at Sochi's Iceberg Skating Palace where figure skating and short-track speed skating will be held during the 2014 Winter Olympics. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Olympic threats a Games changer?

'Rethink.' Western prof. questions whether the Olympics are worth it after Canadian minister issues travel warning for people heading to Sochi

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Any terrorist activity at the Sochi Olympics could lead to a change — if not the demise — of future Games, a London expert said Monday.

Dr. Janice Forsyth, director for the International Centre for Olympic Studies at Western University, said the time has come to determine if the "Olympics are really worth it."

"At some point in time, we really need to stop and think maybe the ideology is beautiful, but the way it has been rolled out into practice just doesn't work any more, and we really need to rethink what the Games are," Forsyth told Metro.

This comes on the heels of a weekend travel warning from Canadian Public Safety Minister Steven Blaney addressed to people heading to Sochi.

"Canadians travelling to the Sochi 2014 Winter Games should take sensible precautions and maintain a high level of vigilance and be aware of their personal surroundings at all times and all places," Blaney said in a statement.

Forsyth said Canadians should pay attention to these government warnings.

"People will make their own decisions about whether they want to go, but these are very real concerns," she said. "We can't ignore these very real official warnings.

"Sochi has definitely changed the way the public and maybe even the way organizers understand the potential of violence at these Games."

Quoted

"How could the NHL send over all these players if they had concerns, right?"

Connie Doughty, mother of Team Canada member/NHLer Drew Doughty

Forsyth said the Olympics offer a unique security challenge, no matter where they're hosted.

"It's a paradox, right? It's probably the most secure place on Earth, but it's also the most insecure place on Earth because of the political platform it offers for people to make statements and in this case violence and terrorism," she said.

Canadian International Olympic Committee member Dick Pound said it's almost impossible in a country the size of Russia or Canada to protect "all places at all times from all risks."

"But if you have a hard target and you decide Sochi is going to be safe, then Sochi will be safe," he told Metro. "It may not be too much fun, but it will be secure."

Pound said he has seen threats of violence and terrorism at many of the Games, but little trouble has surfaced.

"Athens is a far scarier place for security than Sochi is," Pound said. "London (England) had the reverse paradigm (for the 2012 Summer Olympic Games). If you come to Canada, we're trying to keep the bad guys out. In London, the bad guys were already there. It was a completely different security risk and a considerable one."

Meanwhile, Londoners Connie and Paul Doughty, the parents of Olympic hockey player Drew Doughty, will be heading to Sochi and cheering on their son as planned.

"Obviously (we're) concerned, but you want to be there to support them," Connie Doughty said. "It's definitely not Vancouver, but we're still going. We can't live in fear, and I think it's important to show that stance, as well.... Unless something drastic happens between now and the time we fly, I don't see anything changing."

The Sochi Olympics begin Feb. 6. WITH FILES FROM SCOTT TAYLOR

More coverage, page 4

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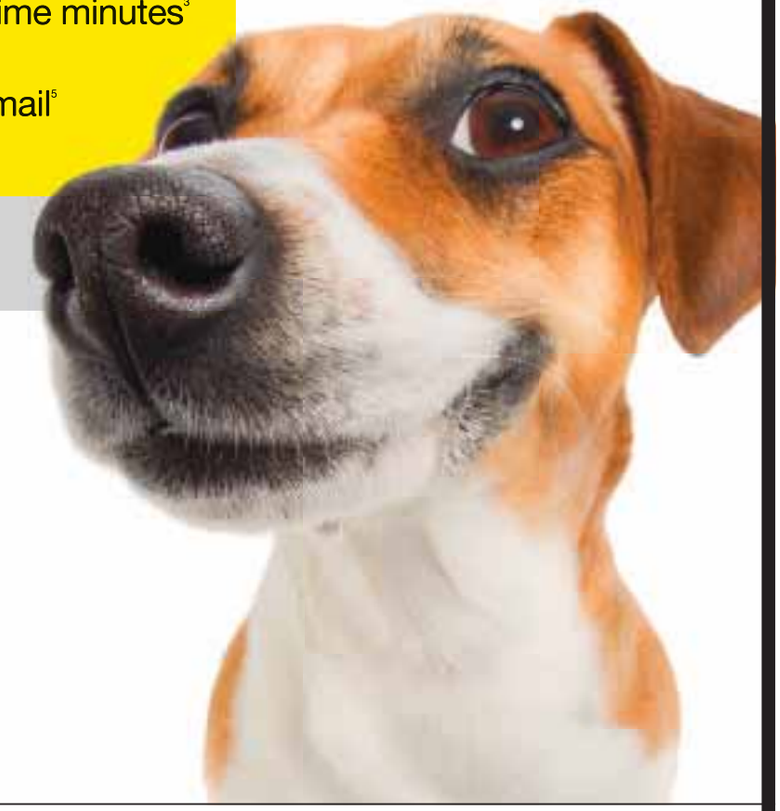

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Mayor Fontana

State of the city address today

Tuesday is a big day in the life of Joe Fontana — it's the mayor's final state of the city address before the October election.

After using the word "jobs" hundreds of times during his current term, he will face hundreds of London's leading business people at the convention centre.

The event is organized by the London Chamber of Commerce. CEO Gerry Macartney expects 1,200 people to attend.

"It's important every year, but in an election year, I think the mayor will outline what will essentially be his platform going forward," Macartney said.

Already, the mayor has said he will discuss an overhead gondola system he wants to see built between SoHo and the Forks of the Thames. MIKE DONACHIE/METRO

Public health

2 more flu deaths

Two more flu deaths occurred in Middlesex-London between Jan. 20 and Sunday, the health unit reported Monday.

That brings the total for the season to six. While influenza activity remains present in the region, it's showing signs of decline, the health unit says.

In all, 13 new cases of H1N1 and a single case of influenza B were reported last week. That's lower than the 27 cases reported the week before.

Since the start of the flu season, a total of 155 laboratory-confirmed cases of flu have been reported.
SCOTT TAYLOR/METRO

Actors Rod Beattie, right, and Brigit Wilson perform in a scene from The Grand Theatre's The Passion of Narcisse Mondoux. The Grand and Orchestra London are creating plans for a new performing arts centre. METRO FILE

Still no spotlight on new venue plan

Funding request. City staff plan for $1M impact on 2014 budget

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The curtain was due to come up, but the details of London's proposed new performing arts venue are still waiting in the wings.

But one thing is clear: Taxpayers could be asked to shell out $1 million for the building immediately.

The joint proposal by The Grand Theatre and Orchestra London was not made public as planned at Monday's meeting of council's investment and economic prosperity committee.

James Caskey, chair of the task force that's putting it together, said there had been an unexpected delay, blaming the disruption of the holidays.

He said it's likely the Downtown Performing Arts and Entertainment Task Force will be back within "a week to 10 days," seeking a special meeting of the same committee to make a full presentation.

Council members did manage to extract some information about how the venue might be funded, though.

Asked by Coun. Paul Hubert if the plans will have an impact on the 2014 city budget, on which debate will start Thursday, Caskey said yes.

City treasurer Martin Hayward chimed in that city staff is suggesting it could mean an unbudgeted request of $1 million, but it's impossible to be sure until all the information is available.

That's only the 2014 budget, too. The implications for future years are unknown, although the business plan will involve funding requests at municipal, provincial and federal levels.

Caskey also confirmed there will be an appeal for public donations.

"It is a significant ask of the people who support the arts and cultural endeavors in this city," he said.

What do we know?

James Caskey went public Monday with just a few details of the performance venue plans.

- He spoke of a cultural district "from King Street to Princess Avenue" including The Grand Theatre, Budweiser Gardens, Museum London, art galleries and other attractions.
- If the task force's vision is accepted, it won't include Centennial Hall. "It should come down," said Caskey, because it's had its time and must be replaced.

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Sochi. Media has lost interest in reporting anti-gay law, IOC member says

The world's concern about terrorist activities at the upcoming Sochi Olympics has been a result of the media losing interest in the homosexual issue in Russia, Canadian IOC member Dick Pound told Metro.

"Nobody has got anything else to write about and for some reason they have sort of moved away from the anti-gay stuff — I think it's not drawing the kind of attention that they wanted," Pound said.

Pound said other countries have "far harsher laws" regarding homosexuals than Russia and little is written on that.

"In Malaysia, you can be put to death. In Nigeria, you can be put in jail for God knows how long," Pound said.

"So it's a target of convenience with respect to Russia — not that I approve of the law — but putting it on a scale of one to 10 of odious laws, it's not way up there near 10."

Pound said much of the anti-Russia gay stand emanates from the United States, where, Pound says, only a handful of states allow same-sex marriage.

"So whose ox is getting gored here?" Pound said.

DAVE LANGFORD/METRO

Canadian IOC member Dick Pound
CONTRIBUTED

Minimum wage. Sources say retroactive hike will be announced this week

Ontario's Liberal government will move quickly to retroactively raise the $10.25-an-hour minimum wage, which has been frozen for four years, sources said Monday.

Government sources said there would be an announcement later this week to hike the minimum wage retroactively to 2010, based on the rate of inflation since then.

Statistics Canada puts the annual inflation rate at 2.9 per cent in 2011, 1.52 per cent in 2012 and 0.91 per cent in 2013.

A special advisory panel set up by the Liberal government to look at ways of adjusting the minimum wage released its report Monday, calling for changes to be linked to the inflation rate, and to give businesses four months warning of any increases.

It recommends the minimum wage be changed April 1 each year, with advance notice in December of exactly how much it will go up, and said the whole process should be reviewed every five years.

Various social groups, unions and health-care professionals have been pressuring governments to raise the minimum wage to $14 an hour, noting it would mean a pre-tax difference of $650 a month to thousands of the lowest-paid workers in Ontario.

But Premier Kathleen Wynne is worried about the impact of such a big hike on business.

"We have to move very carefully because this is about making sure that we retain and create jobs,'' said Wynne. "At the same time, we need to have a system in place that has a fairness to it that I think has not been the case for many years."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

On the rise

A study last fall by the Wellesley Institute showed the number of minimum-wage workers has more than doubled since the Liberals were elected in 2003 to nine per cent of Ontario's workforce in 2011, or 464,000 people.

This parking lot at the northeast corner of Adelaide and Dundas streets was targeted three times by illegal dumpers. MIKE DONACHIE/METRO

Dumpers nabbed after city appeal

Three charged. But problem continues, says city bylaw enforcement chief

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If you're going to dump garbage on city property, there will be consequences.

City bylaw enforcement manager Orest Katolyk sent out that stark warning Monday after saying three people face heavy fines after being caught.

They've been charged with dumping debris on city property as a result of three separate incidents in one parking lot.

All are expected to appear in court in the coming months and could face a $5,000 fine, plus having to pay the city back for the costs of clearing the garbage, which were around $500 each time.

It follows a crackdown on dumping in a particular hot spot. The parking lot at the northeast corner of Adelaide and Dundas streets had big problems, with people repeatedly leaving large pieces of junk there, including barbecues, TVs and couches.

So Katolyk asked Londoners to help, putting out an appeal to find those responsible and sending out, via news outlets and social media, images from security cameras. Tips flooded in.

But catching three people doesn't mean the problem is solved, Katolyk said. Dumping continues in municipal lots, commercial areas, industrial sites and undeveloped lots, he added, and asked people to report any problems.

"Also, I have a message for those people that are doing the dumping," he said. "You might think that you're out where nobody can see you but it's guaranteed that either someone or a camera is watching.

"There are more and more businesses that have cameras on-site for various security reasons and these illegal activities of dumping are being picked up."

Telltale trash

What do people dump? You name it, and we get it, says London bylaw enforcement chief Orest Katolyk.

- As well as the expected garbage, people will dump pretty much anything, from furniture to food.
- Katolyk is often surprised at how easy it is to trace people using personal information found in bags of garbage. City staff has found work schedules, cancelled cheques and even licence plates.

Spate of copper thefts at vacant homes

Empty homes are being stripped of their wiring and tubing by copper thieves, London police say.

Officers have identified a crime pattern in which copper wire is being stripped from vacated homes listed as for sale. Since November, 17 break-and-enters have been reported to police.

Each time, a thief or thieves entered a home and removed copper wiring and copper tubing. The most recent report was made Thursday, when a home had all copper removed from the basement.

Targeted homes have included those in the east end of the city in an area bounded by the Thames River to Oxford Street and Adelaide Street to Clarke Road. In the cases where time of offence can be determined, it appears the offences happened overnight. In all cases, the homes were vacant.

People are being asked to report any suspicious activity in or around vacant homes listed for sale in their neighbourhoods. Anyone with information is asked to call police at 519-661-5670.

MIKE DONACHIE/METRO

A cyclist struggles to free his wheels from thick snow at the corner of Richmond and Horton on Monday afternoon.
SCOTT TAYLOR/METRO

Long, heavy snowfalls tax city resources

'Continually at it.'
Official says demand for snow removal is plowing through London's $12M budget

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London snow-removal forces are looking forward to a respite over the next few days after a long weekend snowstorm strained workers, equipment and their budget.

John Parsons, London's transportation and roads manager, said this season's snow, which started its assault in late November, has been difficult to overcome — not so much for the depth of the storms, but for their length.

"We're finding the events are just longer," he said. "We're kind of used to 10- to 12-hour storm, but we're seeing storms that are lasting three days, like the past one.

"The storm was intermittent — it came and stopped and started up again — but as you're in there with the cleanup effort, it feels continuous."

It's been an almost perfect storm of misfortune. Strong winds, sometimes as high as 80 km/h, have whipped the snow into drifts three feet high or worse on residential driveways, and while some portions of city sidewalks were bare, others were all but impassable.

"Certainly the blowing snow this past weekend was tough," Parsons said. "We didn't get record amounts of snow, but with the drifting we were plowing out areas and they were filling right back in. With drifting, sidewalks fill in quickly and you have to go back around and do them again. It almost feels like you're chasing the same snowflake."

Parsons said the weekend took a big $750,000 bite out of his $12-million annual budget.

"We were continually at it from Friday with a full fleet right into (Monday)," he said.

Nothing worse than flurries are forecast through next weekend.

Quoted

"It almost feels like you're chasing the same snowflake."
John Parsons, London transportation and roads manager

At a glance

- London receives an average of 210 centimetres — that's seven feet — of snow each winter.
- The city is responsible for clearing the 3,500 kilometres of road with 62 plows and 23 sand/salt trucks.
- The city also clears more than 1,300 kilometres of sidewalk with 33 sidewalk plows.

Lack of safety awareness led to rail death of girl: TSB

A lack of awareness and having seen others do it before are the likely reasons an 11-year-old London girl darted across a railway crossing on Dec. 1, 2012, according to a report released Monday by the Transportation Safety Board of Canada (TSB).

Kendra Cameron, 11, died after running from behind a stopped car into the path of an oncoming train at a crossing on Third Street, north of Dundas Street.

As the crossing gates, bells and lights were activated by the Canadian Pacific freight train, Cameron and a friend began to run towards the crossing, officials say. The friend stopped and was not injured.

The TSB believes the youngsters' familiarity with the crossing and having witnessed others crossing the track when a train was approaching likely reduced their perception of the danger involved.

The investigation also determined that a lack of specific education for school-age children and ineffective crossing and trespassing laws increase the risk of similar accidents.

Since the tragedy, the city has ordered the removal of brush near railway crossings to improve sightlines, and CP has made presentations to a number of London schools concerning crossing safety.

Transport Canada also said it's working with London police to increase enforcement, but Sgt. Ryan Scrivens said the local police has had no direct involvement with the TSB.

He did stress that London officers work in partnership with both CP and CN Rail police. SCOTT TAYLOR/METRO

By the numbers

5

The number of people who died at London rail crossings in 2012.

Second case of pig virus found in southwest Ontario

A second case of a highly contagious pig virus that has ravaged herds across the U.S. has been discovered in southwestern Ontario.

The province's chief veterinarian announced the discovery Monday afternoon, just days after the first case of porcine epidemic diarrhea was confirmed in a farm in Middlesex County.

Greg Douglas said the latest case, and a third case which is still under investigation, were found in the Chatham-Kent region.

Hundreds of piglets — nearly 100 per cent of those between two and five days old — have died at the first farm, Douglas said. The other two hold older pigs, which are less likely to die from the disease, he said.

It's unclear where the virus came from, but a group representing Ontario's hog industry has warned it spreads through contact with manure.

Officials say the virus does not affect food safety and is not a risk to human health.

Amy Cronin of Ontario Pork said they anticipate the industry will suffer, but how much depends on how far the disease is able to spread.

"We are putting into place measures to try to manage the virus as best we can and keep it off as many farms as we can given that it is very contagious," she said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"We still are under the impression that there are strategies which we can work on to help mitigate, slow the spread of this virus in Ontario."
Greg Douglas, Ontario's chief veterinarian

Political Games? Tories to deliver federal budget during Winter Olympics

If there was any doubt the upcoming federal budget would be a low-key affair, the Harper Conservatives erased it Monday by announcing plans to deliver their new spending plan during the Winter Olympics.

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty said he'll table the budget on Feb. 11, when many Canadians are likely to be focused on Sochi and hoping for gold-medal performances from their Olympic heroes.

New Democrat Leader Tom Mulcair quickly accused the Conservatives of seeking to avoid public scrutiny of what he predicted would be a no-news, austerity-driven budget, bereft of plans or programs to help create jobs.

"People need help now and the Conservatives should be acting now," Mulcair said.

"But it's quite obvious that they're holding everything in abeyance so that they can have a good-news budget next year, try to claim — without ever having to measure it — that they're heading for a balanced budget and announce all sorts of things." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mistakes on a plane. Cops called as couple get overly amorous while in the air

Two passengers on an Air Canada flight Friday night got a little too frisky, prompting complaints from other travellers and a call to the RCMP.

Police met Flight 610 when it arrived in Halifax from Toronto around 5:30 p.m. Crew members identified a 24-year-old woman and a 38-year-old man as the people who allegedly "engaged in a sexual act" during the flight, said Cpl. Scott MacRae, spokesman for Halifax RCMP. The sex act was not intercourse, MacRae said, noting the people involved still had their clothes on.

"People were not naked by any means," he said.

The situation escalated when officers tried to investigate and the women became "upset and disruptive," and kicked a police officer, MacRae said.

"The woman was very belligerent and continued to be verbally abusive," he said.

No one was injured.

Police arrested the woman, who is from Porters Lake, near Halifax. She spent the night in custody and is facing charges of assaulting a police officer, causing a disturbance and mischief.

The man was released at the airport. Police have not said where he is from.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Florida

Suspect sought in death of Canadian

Police in Florida have issued an arrest warrant for a suspect in the death of a Canadian tourist who was found stabbed on a sidewalk, identified as 58-year-old Domenico Perruccio. His hometown was not immediately known.

Police say an arrest warrant has been issued for 37-year-old Twane Dobard.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Arizona

Calgary doctor killed in base-jumping fall

A base-jumper killed in a fall in Arizona near the Grand Canyon has been identified as a 41-year-old Canadian physician.

The Coconino County Sheriff's Office says the body of Dr. David Stather of Calgary was recovered Saturday after two fellow jumpers reported him missing after he made a jump Friday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TransCanada crews work on a gas pipeline leak that occurred just outside Otterburne, Man., Monday. JOHN WOODS/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Manitobans keep warm after blast

Resiliency. Many residents get creative after pipeline explosion leaves them without heat for third day

Many of the 4,000 residents of southeastern Manitoba affected by a natural gas pipeline explosion proved to be creative and resilient as they entered a third day without heat Monday.

Steve Cope was using an electric fireplace and space heaters to keep his Niverville home warm as the temperature outside dipped to near -30 C.

"One (heater) we've got actually facing the cold-air return on our furnace, so it's kind of blowing that air into that cold-air return. And we have the fan running on the furnace so it's kind of circulating throughout the house," Cope said.

TransCanada Pipelines vice-president Karl Johannson said the company hoped to have natural gas service restored by Tuesday. He suggested some communities could have gas back by Monday night.

There were no reports of injuries from the fiery blast, but Johannson apologized and promised that the company would cover any direct losses people experienced. He thanked neighbours for helping each other by sharing space heaters and accommodation.

Municipalities in the region had set up warming centres, but they were virtually empty.

"It's great news because it means people have been very self-sufficient," Hanover municipality spokeswoman Heather Chambers Ewen said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"We are sorry the impact this is created. We are doing everything we can to restore natural gas services from our pipeline so that your homes and businesses can enjoy the heat that they rely on, especially during this type of cold weather."

TransCanada Pipelines vice-president Karl Johannson

Canadian leaves 'thrown together' Sochi

Johnnie Balfour poses in Sochi in a picture posted to his blog. TUMBLR.COM

A Vancouver ski and snowboard course builder has left Russia after a less-than-stellar welcome to the Olympics.

Johnnie Balfour was hired to help shape courses for the 2014 Sochi Games, but decided not to stick around after a few days living in a dirty hotel room, commuting for two hours along flooded streets and questioning whether he'd be paid, according to his blog.

"I for one can't afford to take the gamble and hope that I will be paid. It is just too big of a risk for me," he wrote in a post that went viral.

Aside from the money issues, Balfour doubted whether Sochi would be ready for the Olympics' Feb. 6 start date.

"Nothing is finished here and there are piles of garbage everywhere. Muddy water is pouring off the mountain and flowing through the streets and the cobblestone pavers are all lifting up or disappearing into sinkholes," he wrote.

"This entire place was built in the last few years, it looks nice at first glance but look a little closer and you can see that it was just thrown together."

EMILY JACKSON/METRO IN VANCOUVER

A protester guards the barricades in front of riot police in Kyiv on Monday. EFREM LUKATSKY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ukraine president offers to scrap anti-protest law

The government steps back. Eliminating the laws will likely be done in a special parliament session Tuesday

Ukraine's beleaguered president on Monday agreed to scrap harsh anti-protest laws that set off a wave of clashes between protesters and police over the past week, a potentially substantial concession to the opposition that stopped short of meeting all of its demands.

In a possibly major sticking point, a proposed amnesty for arrested protesters would not be offered unless demonstrators stopped occupying buildings and ended their round-the-clock protests and tent camp on Kyiv's central Independence Square, according to a statement by Justice Minister Elena Lukash on the presidential website.

President Viktor Yanukovych has been under increasing pressure since he pushed the tough laws through parliament, setting off clashes and protests in other parts of the country in a sharp escalation of tensions after weeks of mostly peaceful protests over his rejection of a deal to deepen ties with the 28-nation European Union.

At a meeting between top opposition figures and Yanukovych late Monday "a political decision was made on scrapping the laws of Jan. 16, which aroused much discussion," Lukash said.

She made no mention of a key opposition demand — that Yanukovych resign.

One of the opposition figures, Arseniy Yatsenyuk, turned down the prime minister's job, which Yanukovych had offered him on Saturday, the statement said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Harper's piece

Prime Minister Stephen Harper expressed concern Monday that Ukraine is backsliding toward its communist past under the Soviet Union.

- Harper's remarks represented a dig at Russian President Vladimir Putin, who has been accused of exerting pressure on Ukraine President Viktor Yanukovych to curb his country's overtures to the West.

Nigeria

Dozens killed in rebel attacks

Suspected Islamic extremists used explosives and heavy guns to attack a village and worshippers during a Christian church service in Nigeria's northeast, killing at least 99 people and razing hundreds of homes, officials and witnesses said Monday.

The attacks took place in Borno and Adamawa states. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tunisia. Progressive new constitution passed

After decades of dictatorship and two years of arguments and compromises, Tunisians finally have a new constitution laying the foundations for a new democracy.

The document is groundbreaking as one of the most progressive constitutions in the Arab world — and for the fact that it got written at all. It passed late Sunday by 200 votes out of the 216 seats in the assembly of the Muslim Mediterranean country that inspired uprisings across the region after overthrowing a dictator in 2011. "This constitution, without being perfect, is one of consensus," assembly speaker Mustapha Ben Jaafar said after the vote. "We had today a new rendezvous with history to build a democracy founded on rights and equality."

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Advocacy groups call Bell out for data collection on wireless customers

Consumer rights. Gathering the watching, clicking and calling of people who pay for telecom service has led to complaints

Consumer groups are challenging Bell Canada's tracking of how its wireless customers use the web, what they watch on TV and their phone call patterns in order to deliver targeted online advertising.

Bell is going beyond its role as a provider of telecom services, according to the Public Interest Advocacy Centre and the Consumers' Association of Canada.

"What you're paying for is an uninterrupted telecom service, not for an ad-based service supported by behavioural targeting, which is the Facebook-Google model," lawyer John Lawford of the Public Interest Advocacy Centre said Monday.

The consumer groups have filed a complaint with the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, describing the practice as an abuse of privacy. They want Bell to be ordered to stop collecting the data.

The CRTC said it was studying the complaint and wouldn't comment further.

The Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada said Monday that it has received more than 150 complaints about Bell's data collection.

It is investigating whether collecting this data is compliant with the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act, the federal law which covers the collection, use and disclosure of information in commercial activities.

Bell said its data collection program isn't breaking any federal telecom rules or privacy guidelines and noted that customers can opt out at any time.

"Because customers would receive random online advertising in any event, they won't actually be seeing more ads, but they will see ads of greater interest to them," Bell spokesman Jason Laszlo said in an email.

Laszlo also said Bell could segment a large group of customers to advertisers who are interested in gaming, for example, but the advertisers wouldn't see any specific details about the customers.

The telecom giant announced last fall that it would collect consumers' data to put targeted ads on mobile devices to be able to compete with search engine Google and social network site Facebook, which offer ads to consumers based on their interests.

But Lawford said he believes the opt-out rate for Bell customers would be low, adding it's usually well under 10 per cent in these kinds of circumstances.

"They catch all of the people who have too many other things to do with their life," he said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

With or without your name

In the U.S., big telecoms Verizon and AT&T also allow their customers to opt-out of data sharing, but critics have said that even with personal identities stripped out the information still can be sold to third parties who would get a profile of customers' habits and interests.

Rouge

Air Canada's discount carrier adding routes

Air Canada is adding service to more sun destinations on its low cost Rouge subsidiary this spring and summer as it continues to transfer older aircraft from its main fleet.

The airline said Monday that it will be adding new routes from Toronto and Montreal. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Silk Road site

2 Bitcoin sellers charged in drug-trafficking case

U.S. authorities said Monday they have charged two men with conspiring to commit money laundering by selling more than $1 million in bitcoins to users of the black market website Silk Road. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Market Minute

DOLLAR 89.99¢ (-0.32¢)

TSX 13,582.29 (-135.47)

OIL $95.72 US (-$0.92)

GOLD $1,263.40 US (-$0. 90)

Natural gas: $4.93 US (-$0.22)
Dow Jones: 15,837.88 (-41.23)

Rolling in the green from Stoner Bowl?

Bryan Weinman is pictured with two of his Stoner Bowl T-shirts in southeast Denver on Friday. Weinman and a few buddies registered the Internet domain www.stonerbowl.org and are using the website to hawk T-shirts and hats celebrating the Stoner Bowl between the Seattle Seahawks and Denver Broncos — the NFL teams from the two states that have legalized marijuana. One shirt features the Vince Lombardi Trophy, reserved for the game's victors, refashioned into a bong. Another displays a spoof of the league's logo, with the letters THC replacing NFL. ED ANDRIESKI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

$650M deal. Hudson's Bay Co. to get swish makeover with Saks Fifth Avenue

Hudson's Bay Co. plans to open a pair of Saks Fifth Avenue luxury department stores in Toronto, the first such locations in Canada.

The retailer says one store will share space with HBC's flagship store in downtown Toronto, while the second store will be at the Sherway Gardens mall, in the city's west end.

The news came as HBC announced a deal to sell and lease back its main downtown Toronto store and executive offices to Cadillac Fairview for $650 million.

HBC will lease back the properties for 25 years with options to extend the leases nearly 50 additional years.

The company says it will use the cash from the sales to pay down debt and fund growth.

A man leaves the downtown Toronto flagship Hudson's Bay Co. store in Toronto on Monday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

The HBC flagship store is across the street from Cadillac Fairview's Eaton Centre, which recently landed Seattle-based Nordstrom as a tenant in some of the space being vacated by Sears. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Booking.yeah. Travel site goes from Google searches to guffaws with new ads

When Canadian Darren Huston was recruited to join the leadership team at the Priceline Group, he sheepishly had to admit he'd never heard of the biggest company in the group's corporate stable.

No, not Priceline, the travel bidding site popularized by the wacky ads starring fellow Canuck William Shatner. The biggest company in the group is Booking.com, a challenger to the likes of Expedia, Orbitz and Travelocity that's big overseas but little known on this side of the pond. A minute-long TV spot titled "Booking.yeah" aims to change that.

The ads show anxious travellers preparing to open the doors to their rental properties while an amusingly over-the-top voiceover grows increasingly enthusiastic. "You got it booking right" and "it doesn't get any booking better than this" are a few of the commercial's one-liners.

Huston said the ads were designed to make Booking.com more memorable, given much of its business comes through Google searches, not because they're familiar with the company. THE CANADIAN PRESS

CONSUMER CHOICE AWARD 2014 BUSINESS EXCELLENCE
LONDON 2014
AWARD-WINNERS

THEY'RE JUST NOT INTO YOU

SHE SAYS

Jessica Napier
metronews.ca

While most of us can't imagine going through life without experiencing some form of carnal desire, researchers estimate about one per cent of the population — up to 70 million people worldwide — have absolutely no sex drive. Not in a "No honey, not tonight. I have a headache" kind of way but an ongoing disinterest in sexual behaviour with members of the same or opposite sex.

According to the Asexual Visibility and Education Network, an asexual person is a person who does not experience sexual attraction. Anthony Bogaert, a professor in the psychology department at Brock University, refers to asexuality as the "fourth sexual orientation," distinct from heterosexuality, homosexuality or bisexuality. Like other sexual orientations, asexuality is classified as an intrinsic part of a person's identity and not something that can be turned on or off.

Some couples might lose interest in sexual activity during particular phases in their relationships — following childbirth or while faced with health problems or personal struggles — but these issues are usually a temporary concern rather than an innate and enduring absence of desire. Asexuals do not choose to abstain from sex for religious or moral reasons; it is not the result of some traumatic childhood event or because they haven't found the right person.

For those who identify as asexual, this apathetic attitude toward sex is much more than just a simple dry spell or an empty vow of celibacy following a bad breakup. Many feel confused and isolated as they come to terms with their asexuality in our hyper-sexualized culture. I can imagine it would be hard not to feel like an outsider in a society where people read erotic paperbacks on the bus and talk about sexual positions in graphic detail over brunch.

It's important to remember that sexuality exists on an extremely vast and complicated spectrum. From pansexuals to polyamorous to demiromantics to autosexuals, there exists a veritable alphabet soup of sexual preferences and expressions.

And while different forms of categorization can be helpful in promoting visibility, educating others and developing a sense of community, labelling shouldn't be done for negative or exclusionary purposes.

Sexual desire might be one of our most basic biological instincts, but that doesn't mean we should judge those who choose to have intimacy without intercourse. Accepting sexual diversity means recognizing the many different forms of attraction and giving others the freedom to embody their own sexuality, even if that means not at all.

Follow Jessica Napier on Twitter @MetroSheSays

ZOOM

Hockey, played Down Under

MATT ROBERTS/GETTY IMAGES

Gasp! Not much of a spectator sport

Athletes for Western Australia and Victoria contest for the puck at the 2014 Australian Underwater Hockey Championships on the Gold Coast, Australia. The sport, also known as octopush, was invented in England in the 1950s by a scuba diver as a way of keeping his fellow divers fit and enthused over the winter months. METRO

Water world

- **Teams.** Six players a side, with four substitutes each.
- **Gear.** Snorkel, mouthguard, water polo hat with ear guards, mask, fins, stick, and protective gloves.
- **Breath.** Too deep a breath will make you too buoyant.

Clickbait

TAKARA SMALL
takara.small@metronews.ca

This weather may be testing the patience of millions of Canadians from coast to coast but that doesn't mean that your style has to suffer. There are a host of apps that are dedicated to helping you stay stylish without leaving your house because, let's admit it, you're probably more likely to cruise online deals than the malls these days.

@ClothApp:

Use real-time weather data to pull together your outfit for the day. Selflessly snap as many selfies as you want and then choose from a virtual catalogue that pairs your clothes with the weather. Literally the perfect app for rain or shine.

@Stylekick:

Why waste time searching various fashion sites when you can simply snap photos of your wardrobe and then find the right size and style online. With a click of a button you can find clothes that suit your size, which helps a lot since 40 per cent of online purchases are reportedly returned because of bad fit.

GETTY IMAGES

Twitter

@metropicks asked: A brew coming to B.C. costs $150/bottle. What freebies would be required for you to buy the beer?

@funkymagee: Probably about forty-nine other bottles.

@MichaelJSealy: Any freebie that I could come up with to justify 150 bones for a Brewski, would have to do with cleavage and be very naughty :-/

@ChrisGoudge1: Three or four 24s would make it worthwhile

@Adrian_Cgy: bag of weed

@Hanksterific: Nothing!

@FrenchmanCanada: at that price it better pour itself

@etihWynoT: I could see spending $150 & sipping it for a special occasion, but at 28% alc. it should come with G2 & Ibuprofen.

Follow @metropicks and take part in our daily poll.

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Send us your comments: londonletters@metronews.ca

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CONSUMER CHOICE AWARD 2014 BUSINESS EXCELLENCE
LONDON 2014
AWARD-WINNERS

DVD review

Rush

Director. Ron Howard

Stars. Daniel Brühl, Chris Hemsworth, Olivia Wilde

You'd expect a movie about Formula One racers to cut to the chase, but director Ron Howard takes his time establishing the ego vs. egghead rivalry between 1976 top guns James Hunt (Chris Hemsworth) and Niki Lauda (Daniel Brühl). This is no mere thrill ride by two real-life rival speedsters, although it is certainly that. The film also provides a sobering look at what it takes to be a true champion. When the engines really start, the fact-based story by Peter Morgan (The Queen) locks in. It smoothly shifts gears between involving entertainment and serious drama, seeking to understand the competitive drive to succeed at all costs. The film is highly commercial, but also thoughtful and suspenseful. Do yourself a favour and don't Google the result prior to seeing. Extras include deleted scenes and making-of featurettes.

PETER HOWELL

A Great Big World really do have something to say

Piano pop. Duo has been working together since their days at NYU, but Aguilera's vocals on Say Something changed their lives forever

LINDA LABAN
Metro World News

Ian Axel, left, and Chad Vaccarino are the duo behind A Great Big World. CONTRIBUTED

Singing with superstars and performing with supermodels are just two of the many mind-blowing hookups Ian Axel and Chad Vaccarino experienced last year.

The piano pop duo, known as A Great Big World, performed on The Voice, at the American Music Awards and during the Victoria's Secret lingerie show. However, it was a phone call from Christina Aguilera, asking if she could sing on their song Say Something, that got the ball rolling.

"When we got the call, it was disbelief that went into a panic attack," Axel says. "I knew what this meant; I knew our lives were changed forever."

Still, it was a hookup eight years earlier, while both were studying in NYU's music business program, that put the 28-year-olds on track to the top of the pop charts. Though A Great Big World's seamless harmonies seem like destiny, the union wouldn't have happened if Axel hadn't literally stalked Vaccarino.

"We were put on the same project and I asked him to listen to my songs," says Axel. "He was like, 'No, I'm too busy, I don't have time for anything else.' He really wanted to practice by himself, but I went to the practice room and looked through all the windows until I found him. I had to be pushy, I had to."

Vaccarino agrees with Axel's assessment: "I was really weirded out by how forceful he was, trying to have my friendship," he says.

The pair both laugh warmly at the recollection. "Then, when he played me his song ideas on piano, I flipped out. Those concerns went out of the window. I was like, 'Oh my God, I'm so stupid! We should be writing together; we should be friends.'"

The pair say that choosing between their original recording of Say Something and the one with Aguilera was just too difficult, so A Great Big World's debut album, Is There Anybody Out There?, which was released in January, includes both cuts.

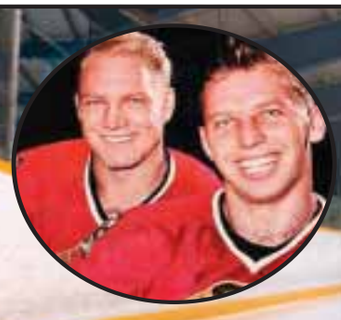
"I love both versions," says Vaccarino. "I was definitely married to the original, but I love what Christina did: I love that she added this female element. She made the song more universal than it might have been. You have the two parallel male and female worlds, and they don't come together until the end of the song. It's all harmonized except for that last line. It's very dramatic."

Quoted

"I was really weirded out by how forceful he was, trying to have my friendship."

Chad Vaccarino, talking about how Ian Axel 'stalked' him while they were classmates at NYU's music business program.

ROGERS SPORTS celebrity Dinner and Auction



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METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

Serious slip-ups cast SMH shadow over song awards

MELINDA TAUB
Metro World News

The Grammy Awards would like everyone to know how very, very sorry they are about the death of what's-his-name.

Glee star Cory Monteith, who died last summer, was included in the Grammys' In Memoriam montage of musicians lost in the past year. However, the slideshow spelled his name "Cory Montieth."

Listen, Grammys, I know you're a drunken, long-winded stripper of an awards show, but if you're only going to spell-check one thing — one thing — it should probably be the names of deceased people. Maybe next year, have one fewer fake blood cannon and put that part of the budget toward a proof-reader.

Glee isn't the only one with a grievance against the Grammys: Trent Reznor is none to happy with them, either.

Reznor's band Nine Inch Nails gave the awards show's closing performance, along with Queens of the Stone Age, Dave Grohl and Fleetwood Mac's Lindsey Buckingham. Unfortunately, by the end of a four-hour ceremony, not even all that star power could induce people to wait around and listen — the Grammys began to roll the credits during the performance.

Reznor didn't take it lying down. "A heartfelt F— YOU guys," he tweeted.

Prince ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

This is what it looks like, when Prince sues

Prince is going after some of his fans for posting recordings of some live performances online. According to Radar Online, the singer is suing two California individuals for infringing on his copyright by sharing bootlegs, and he's seeking $1 million US in damages from each of them. "The defendants rely on either Google's Blogger platform or Facebook, or both, to accomplish their unlawful activity," the suit claims, adding that the fans "typically publish posts that list all the songs performed at a certain Prince live show and then provide a link to a file-sharing service where unauthorized copies of the performance can be downloaded." Prince's lawyers say they have found more than 360 such links.

Quentin ain't gonna to let us Gawk at his script

Quentin Tarantino

Quentin Tarantino sued the news and gossip website Gawker on Monday over a post that directed readers to a leaked copy of the Oscar-winning screenwriter's latest script.

Tarantino's lawsuit accuses Gawker Media LLC of copyright infringement for posting a link to the 146-page script for a planned film titled The Hateful Eight last week. A link to the script was posted on Gawker's Defamer blog and remained active on Monday afternoon, despite demands from Tarantino's lawyers to take it down, the lawsuit states.

An email sent to Gawker seeking comment was not immediately returned.

Tarantino blasted the leak last week in an interview with deadline.com and said he would abandon the project as a film.

His lawsuit states he planned to publish the screenplay and that practice in the past has earned him hefty royalties and advances.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Twitter

@MarlonWayans
Love that u guys can actually hear the wild, crazy, off-base, sometimes crass and rude thoughts in my head thru social media

@EmWatson
Computer just crashed. Pain au chocolat anyone?

@pattonoswalt
Fun fact about @HBO's #TrueDetective: It started as a MR. BELVEDERE reboot and went waaaaaay off the tracks.

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Review

Keep track of burned calories with Wii Fit U

MIND THE APP
Kris Abel
@RealKrisAbel
scene@metronews.ca

Wii Fit U
Nintendo Wii U
3 ½ Stars
Wii Fit's engaging yoga and aerobics mix is still too reliant on BMI even as it provides excellent balance feedback and, thanks to a new pedometer, calories burned. Be warned, the best dance and game activities now require two controllers.

Did you know...?

Avocados may halt overeating and snacking. Consuming as little as half an avocado during lunch can make an overweight person feel full longer, says a new Loma Linda University health study published in Nutrition Journal. Researchers found a 23 per cent increase in satisfaction and a 28 per cent decreased desire to eat for the following five hours, as compared with the avocado-free controlled lunch meal.

Ninety to 95 per cent of the vitamin D in your body comes from sun exposure. ISTOCK

How to get that vitamin D

Can't get enough. Obtaining vitamin D takes some strategies — especially during the winter months

VIRGINIA PELLEY
Metro World News in New York City

You know vitamin D is important for your health, and you've likely read that hardly anyone gets enough of it.

Many studies suggest that maintaining the amount of D recommended by the National Institutes of Health — 30 to 50 nanograms per millilitre in your blood — can help ward off high blood pressure, multiple sclerosis, fibromyalgia, diabetes, depression, some cancers and muscle weakness.

So how do you keep up a healthy level of vitamin D?

The best way is exposure to the sun in warmer months. "Ninety to 95 per cent of the vitamin D in your body comes from sensible sun exposure," Dr. Michael F. Holick, professor of medicine, physiology and biophysics at Boston University School of Medicine, says.

Skin needs to be exposed directly to the sun for your body to make vitamin D. A product with SPF 30 decreases your ability to make vitamin D by 95 per cent. Because dermatologists have been telling us for decades to never expose unprotected skin to the sun's cancer-causing rays, many people are understandably confused about how to get enough vitamin D from sun exposure.

"For some people, it could be 10 minutes, for others it can be 15," says Dr. Houman Danesh, director of integrated pain management at Mt. Sinai in New York City.

How can you get enough vitamin D from the sun during winter? Your body will access the vitamin D in your fat cells, and because most people don't get enough sun to make this crucial vitamin year-round, taking a supplement can also help.

Although the Institute of Medicine recommends 400 to 600 IUs of vitamin D for children and 600 to 800 for adults, Holick recommends 600 to 1,000 for kids, and as much as 2,000 to 4,000 IUs daily for adults. Pregnant and lactating women and the obese need more. Breast milk doesn't contain vitamin D, so Holick says that even breastfeeding infants need a daily supplement.

It's also impossible to get all the vitamin D you need from food. You would need to eat wild-caught salmon and other fatty fish such as mackerel and herring every day to get enough D. Vitamin D is added to many foods, such as milk, juice and cereal, however, and mushrooms can be irradiated with good amounts of vitamin D as well.

Because of conflicting recommendations and research about what vitamin D actually does, "doctors are struggling with who to check, if they should check and when to check vitamin D levels," says Dr. Robert Graham, an internist at Lenox Hill Hospital in New York City. "But I would argue that you need to get tested first to know at what level you are starting with, and figure out how much you need to supplement from there."

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Best Health Minute

How's your cholesterol?

BEST HEALTH MINUTE
Bonnie Munday
Editor-in-chief
Best Health Magazine

About 40 per cent of Canadians have high cholesterol, and it's one of the first warning signs for heart disease.

Ahead of Heart Month, which is February, in the latest issue of Best Health magazine we have a feature article by Diane Peters about how you can keep your cholesterol in check.

What is cholesterol? It's a fat that occurs naturally in the blood. High levels of low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol, known as "bad" cholesterol, lead to the buildup of plaque in the arteries, which can result in heart attacks and stroke. High-density lipoprotein (HDL) is the "good" cholesterol, as it moves LDL away from artery walls.

Risk factors: Men and women are at risk for high LDL cholesterol if they are inactive or overweight, smoke or eat an unhealthy diet. But there are thin people who are fit and eat the right foods who also have high levels. Cholesterol climbs with age for both men and women.

The only way to know if you have the condition is to get tested by your doctor.

How to prevent it: You can reduce levels by as much as 10 per cent by quitting smoking, exercising more and changing your diet.

A Mediterranean-style diet including fresh produce, olive oil and lean meats can reduce heart attacks and stroke risk by 30 percent. Cholesterol levels can be reduced by eating less butter, eggs, cheese, organ meats, shellfish and fatty meats such as sausage and bacon, and adding more soluble fibre and nuts into your diet.

BEST HEALTH MAGAZINE IS ON NEWSSTANDS, OR YOU CAN SUBSCRIBE AT BESTHEALTHMAG.CA. WE ALSO HAVE AN AWARD-WINNING IPAD EDITION.

Sesame Street teaches kids the ABC's of health

A is for apple. Muppet-led preschool program that teaches kids about nutrition and exercise is seeing results

Bert and Ernie jump rope and munch apples and carrots, and Cookie Monster has his namesake treat once a week, not every day. Can a Muppets mini-makeover improve kids' health, too?

A three-year experiment in South America suggests it can. Now, the Sesame Street project is coming to the United States.

Already, a test run in a New York City preschool has seen results: Four-year-old Jahmeice Strowder got her mom to make cauliflower for the first time in her life. A classmate, Bryson Payne, bugged his dad for a banana every morning and more salads. A parent brought home a loaf of bread instead of Doritos.

Six years ago, Dr. Valentin Fuster, a cardiologist at New York City's Mount Sinai Hospital, started working with Sesame Workshop, producers of television's Sesame Street, on a project aimed at 3-to-5-year-olds.

"At that age they pay attention to everything" and habits can be changed, he said.

For Sesame Street, the project offered a chance to improve the lives of young viewers and give a makeover to certain Muppets. The producers even made a doctor Muppet — Dr. Ruster (pronounced "Rooster") — in Fuster's image for the preschool project.

U.S. schools were initially reluctant, but the project launched in Colombia when a wealthy family's foundation was willing to sponsor the experiment in Bogota.

It involved 1,216 children and 928 parents. Kids had training on healthy habits and how the body works for an hour a day for five months using Sesame Workshop-produced videos, a board game, songs and activities. Parents were involved through take-home assignments and workshops that focused on overcoming barriers to good food and exercise.

New Muppet Dr. Ruster, center, with, from left, Grover, Rosita, Elmo, Cookie Monster, Ernie and Bert. SESAME WORKSHOP/JOHN BARRETT/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Children's weight and exercise habits were measured at the start, one and a half years, and three years into the program. The proportion of children at a healthy weight increased from 62 per cent at the start to 75 per cent at three years for those in the program.

The program will be launching in New York this spring and fall. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

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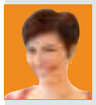
Get your daily dose of dark, leafy greens with Kale and Fig Salad

Health Solutions

Give a fig



NUTRI-BITES
Theresa Albert
DHN, RNCP
myfriendinfood.com

Dried fruit is to be used sparingly because it is quite calorie dense but, boy, does it add a lot!

High in both potassium and fibre, one or two figs make a great treat. To stretch their flavour and benefits without swallowing a calorie bomb, add them to other dishes.

- Chop figs into salads instead of the more typical mandarin oranges or strawberries
- Add to a smoothie for fibre and bulk as well as sweetness
- Cut in half and simmer 1 cup into 1 cup of water to make a fig paste for charcuterie plates
- Chop one into bits and top a pizza with blue cheese
- Add to a savoury rice pilaf with nuts

Anywhere you need little hit of sweetness, figs can contribute much more than their little shrivelled up weight.

THERESA ALBERT IS A FOOD COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST AND PRIVATE NUTRITIONIST IN TORONTO. SHE IS @THERESAALBERT ON TWITTER AND FOUND DAILY AT MYFRIENDINFOOD.COM

This recipe serves four. COURTESY THERESA ALBERT

THERESA ALBERT
myfriendinfood.com

The secret to preparing kale is to give it a good rinse under running water. Then, hold the rib in one hand and grasp the leaves at the base with the other. Quickly pull your hands in opposite directions to remove the leaves for chopping and discard the stems.

FLASH FOOD

From your fridge to your table in 30 minutes or less

1. Rip or chop kale into bite-sized pieces and place into a large bowl. Drizzle with vinegar and oil. Toss in figs and pumpkin seeds.

2. Toss and let stand at room temperature about one hour before serving. Can be stored in the fridge up to 3 days, covered. It just gets better!

THERESA ALBERT IS A FOOD COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST AND TORONTO PERSONAL NUTRITIONIST. SHE IS @THERESAALBERT ON TWITTER AND FOUND DAILY AT MYFRIENDINFOOD.COM

Ingredients

- 1 bunch kale, rinsed, with ribs removed (about 6-7 cups)
- 2 tbsp raspberry balsamic (or other raspberry vinegar)
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 6 mission figs, chopped
- 1/3 cup roasted, salted pumpkin seeds

Blueberries and quinoa give salad a punch

Ingredients

- 1 pound butternut squash, peeled, seeded and cubed
- 4 tbsp olive oil, divided
- 2 cups water
- 1 cup raw quinoa, rinsed well
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 3/4 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp pepper
- 4 green onions, thinly sliced
- 1-1/2 cups Chilean blueberries
- 3 cups baby arugula

Two of nature's superfoods — fresh blueberries and quinoa — team up with butternut squash to create a salad that's packed with protein, bursting with sweet and tangy flavor, and colourful enough to brighten the drab days of winter.

The protein in this salad comes from quinoa — one cup has a full gram more than is found in an egg.

1. Preheat oven to 450°F. In a large bowl, toss squash with 1 tablespoon of the oil. Spread on a rimmed baking sheet; bake until tender, about 22 minutes; let cool.

2. Meanwhile, in a medium saucepan, bring water and quinoa to a boil; simmer for 15-20 minutes. Remove from heat and cover; let stand 5 minutes. Fluff with a fork; cool.

3. In a small bowl whisk together remaining olive oil, lemon juice, salt and pepper; set aside.

5. In a large bowl combine squash, green onions, blueberries, arugula and quinoa. Drizzle with dressing; toss to combine. Serves six.

Quinoa can also be substituted with couscous.

NEWS CANADA/THE U.S. HIGHBUSH BLUEBERRY COUNCIL

This recipe serves six. NEWS CANADA

Ski cross

One more shot at medal for Del Bosco

Chris Del Bosco has a chance at redemption.

The 31-year-old was among the six athletes named Monday to Canada's ski cross team for the Sochi Winter Olympics.

Del Bosco appeared to have the bronze medal locked up in the men's final at the 2010 Games in Vancouver, but crashed out trying to make a pass to improve his position.

Joining the Montreal skier on the team are London's Dave Duncan, Calgary's Brady Leman, Kelsey Serwa of Kelowna, B.C., Marielle Thompson of Whistler, B.C., and Georgia Simmerling of West Vancouver, B.C.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

London's Dave Duncan on Monday in Vancouver THE CANADIAN PRESS

Slopestyle

Injured gold-medal contender McMorris 'doing better than we all thought'

Olympic gold-medal favourite Mark McMorris is in "great spirits," despite a fall that fractured a rib and nearly derailed his dream.

Don McMorris, the snowboarder's father, says Mark is moving around quite well after the incident during Saturday's slopestyle event at the Winter X Games in Aspen, Colo.

"When we left him (Sunday), he could bend over and touch his toes because of where (the injury) is at," Don McMorris told The Canadian Press on Monday. "You know a cracked rib in the front, you couldn't do that, but where it's at (around the back), he could bend to his toes and could raise his knees up to kind of his chest.

"He was really doing better than we all thought. He's got five or six days before he has to worry about riding and he's got the best people around him."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Lightning take on SkyHawks in Gatineau

London Lightning guard Darin Mency defends the Ottawa SkyHawks' Mike Rose on Monday night at Cégep de l'Outaouais in Gatineau, Que. Go to metronews.ca for results from the game. MIKE CARROCCETTO/FOR METRO

Seasons changing for ice dance greats

Ice dance. Local duo Virtue and Moir vow to soak up final Olympic experience in Sochi

It's the final chapter of Canada's most successful ice dance story.

So when Tessa Virtue and Scott Moir touch down in Sochi for the Winter Olympics, they intend to soak up every second of it.

"I think we might just strap GoPro cameras to our heads," Moir joked. "We're going to try our best to be present. That's really our goal. We want to take in every moment. It really is a beautiful ride, and we're going to enjoy every single little bit of it."

That ride began in 1997, when Virtue was just seven and Moir was nine, and now, after an Olympic gold medal and two world titles, they're expected to retire after Sochi, closing the book on a partnership that has spanned nearly two decades.

Virtue, from London and Moir, from Ilderton, captured gold at the 2010 Games in Vancouver, becoming the first North Americans to win an Olympic ice dance title. At just 20 and 22, they were the youngest ice dancers to ever win gold.

Tessa Virtue and Scott Moir's Olympic free dance will be to Alexander Glazunov's The Seasons. DAVE SANDFORD/GETTY IMAGES

But the hours and days that followed were a blur.

"People ask us, 'What was it like?' Some parts I don't even remember, it was such a whirlwind," Moir said. "Especially right after we won, there are about five days there that have gone missing. You look at photographs and kind of go, 'Oh that was there?'"

"It is overwhelming, absolutely," Virtue added. "I wish that I journalled more. I remember getting back to the athletes' village and thinking, 'You can either sleep for half an hour, take a shower, or write in your journal.'"

Their free dance for Sochi is to The Seasons by Russian composer Alexander Glazunov. After the passion and drama of last season's Carmen program, this year's long program is more reminiscent of the romance and silvery grace of their Vancouver Olympic free dance to Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 5.

The Seasons mirrors the story of their partnership, from their early success that included a world junior title through the more turbulent times, to now. The final 30 seconds of the four-minute program represent Sochi. Their final pose is an elegant bow, one last salute to cap a couple of wonderful careers. THE CANADIAN PRESS

American obstacles

Virtue and Moir's only real rivals are Americans Meryl Davis and Charlie White, who share the same coach — Marina Zoueva — at their training base in Canton, Mich. Davis and White were runners-up to the Canadians in Vancouver, and won the 2011 and 2013 world championships.

- Davis and White edged Virtue and Moir in their only head-to-head competition this season — the Grand Prix Final in December.

4 SPORTS

NHL. Coach says Kessel, van Riemsdyk are fine after apparent injuries

Practice had barely just begun on Monday morning when Phil Kessel hobbled off the ice.

The Leafs' leading scorer returned later, but did not participate fully in the drills.

Near the end of practice, the team's second leading scorer, James van Riemsdyk, left and did not return.

Having two-thirds of the Leafs' top line leave practice sent ripples of concern throughout the MasterCard Centre in Etobicoke.

The Leafs have been trying to cope with injuries to key players such as Dave Bolland and Trevor Smith.

If Kessel and van Riemsdyk are less than 100 per cent going down the stretch, the Leafs' playoff chances will certainly be dim.

Coach Randy Carlyle, however, was a picture of calm afterward as he was asked if his heart skipped a beat when Kessel left the ice.

"No, not at all," the coach said. "He had some issues before practice, so it wasn't a surprise for the coaching staff."

The Leafs' Phil Kessel stepped off the ice Monday after an apparent injury. JOHN WOODS/THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Carlyle cautioned fans and media from reading too much into the absence of the two stars for parts of practice.

He said that he would rather have them miss practice than to miss any part of the game against the Tampa Bay Lightning.

They both should be available by game time, Carlyle said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Phoenix Open

Back pain could keep Mickelson from title defence

Phil Mickelson flew to Georgia to see a specialist about the pain in his lower back, hopeful of defending his title in the Phoenix Open.

Mickelson, who first felt soreness in his back while in Abu Dhabi, withdrew after making the 36-hole cut in the Farmers Insurance Open at Torrey Pines. He said he did not want to risk getting into bad habits by compensating for pain.

Mickelson met with Tom Boers, who told him his facet joints had locked up. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NFL

No radical changes ahead for Bills' D-line: Schwartz

Mario Williams and the rest of the Buffalo Bills defensive front can breathe easier with Jim Schwartz taking over.

The Bills' newly hired defensive co-ordinator indicated on Monday he has no plans to make drastic changes to the aggressive approach that made Buffalo one of the NFL's most feared pass-rushing teams last season.

And that means he intends to continue leaning on a Williams-led defensive line. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Broncos CB: 'I've had my fun in this league'

Super Bowl. Defensive star Rodgers-Cromartie mulling a post-NFL championship career change after six seasons

Dominique Rodgers-Cromartie is 27 years old, right in his prime as an NFL player.

Perfect time to retire.

The Denver Broncos cornerback said Monday he's giving serious consideration to hanging it up after the Super Bowl. He's not burned out, not worried about his health.

He just figures he's had a good run.

"I had a goal of playing five years, and I reached that," Rodgers-Cromartie said.

He's completed six seasons in the NFL, in fact, and could be in line to command plenty of money after making three interceptions in 2013. But Rodgers-Cromartie insisted that depending on how he feels after Sunday's game, he might call it quits.

He even knows what he would do instead of football. He'd go back to college and study psychology to become a guidance counsellor at his old high school.

"I had my fun in this league," he said.

Rodgers-Cromartie came out of Football Championship Subdivision's Tennessee State and figures he wasn't supposed to make it in the NFL at all from a small school, let alone surpass the average two to three years that players last in the league.

He wasn't a typical lower-division prospect, though, selected by the Cardinals with the 16th overall pick in 2008. Rodgers-Cromartie played three years in Arizona and two in Philadelphia before joining the Broncos.

He regularly tells his teammates about his plan.

"They always think I am joking about it," he said.

Even if he sticks around next season, Rodgers-Cromartie can't imagine repeating the feat of fellow Denver cornerback Champ Bailey, who's in his 15th year in the league.

Asked about Bailey's longevity, Rodgers-Cromartie exclaimed a curse word in admiration, then added, "He can have that."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dominique Rodgers-Cromartie of the Denver Broncos speaks to the media on Monday in Jersey City, N.J. The Broncos cornerback says he is seriously considering retirement after his team plays the Seahawks at Super Bowl XLVIII at Metlife Stadium on Feb. 2. JEFF ZELEVANSKY/GETTY IMAGES

In need of guidance?

"I had a goal of playing five years, and I reached that."

Broncos cornerback Dominique Rodgers-Cromartie, 27, on considering retiring from the NFL after the Super Bowl following six seasons with three different teams.

Notes from New Jersey

- **Temperate title game.** The weather forecast for the first Super Bowl in an outdoor stadium in a cold-weather city is nothing out of the ordinary. National Weather Service meteorologist Anthony Gigi said Monday the forecast calls for temperatures to reach a high of 4C with a low of -3C. There is little threat of precipitation.
- **Bud bowl.** Seahawks coach Pete Carroll said Monday he supports Commissioner Roger Goodell's message last week that the league could consider medicinal marijuana as a treatment if science proved it could be beneficial for players who have suffered concussions.
- **Betting on a record.** Fans bet an unprecedented $99 million on the Super Bowl last year, and the Nevada gambling industry expects to break the record again Sunday.

Seahawks punter Jon Ryan GETTY IMAGES FILE

Canadian punter's city flies Seahawks flag

A flag is now flying at Regina City Hall to support the first Saskatchewan-born player to compete in the Super Bowl.

Punter Jon Ryan will be on the Seattle Seahawks' side of the field when they take on the Denver Broncos in the National Football League championship this weekend.

Regina Mayor Michael Fougere and members of Ryan's family raised the flag in the icy cold on Monday morning.

Fougere said it's important to support Ryan in the biggest game of his life.

Ryan was born in Regina and played college football for the University of Regina Rams.

He began his professional career with the Winnipeg Blue Bombers of the Canadian Football League.

Ryan's brother, Steve, and his mother, Barb, were among the family members that helped raise the navy-and-white flag Monday. They will also be among 15 family and friends travelling to MetLife Stadium in the New York area.

"I still haven't wrapped my head around the fact that (the Seahawks) are going to be there," said Steve Ryan. "It's going to be incredible."

The family is to leave for the Super Bowl on Thursday.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canadian fan club

"Through social media, phone calls, texts, he's just felt overwhelmed with the support."

Steve Ryan, Jon Ryan's brother

Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
Don't get discouraged if something you attempt does not work out the way you expected it to – it is still good practice and may even take you in a profitable new direction.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
You have your sights fixed on certain goals and won't give up until you have reached them. However, cosmic activity in the area of your chart that governs dreams and desires warns you to get your ego out of the way.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Make an effort to see things as they are, unclouded by wishful thinking or negative expectations. The planets indicate you can achieve more now than at just about any other time.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
Your confidence is high and you are intensely ambitious, but the planets warn that someone you think of as a friend is jealous of your success and plotting against you. Watch your back.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
Although you think you know what is going on you would still be wise to wait a day or two before making any major decisions.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You need to make a serious effort to sort out your problems with partners and loved ones. You may not want to make the first approach but if you do you won't regret it. Show that you are ready to talk things through.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Someone in a position of authority will look on you kindly today. What have you done to deserve their support? Who knows, but you would be a fool not to make the most of it.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Anything of a creative nature will go well, but it will go even better if you make an effort to involve loved ones in what you are doing. Don't let others feel left out. Let them help you.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
The Sun in Aquarius makes you more sociable than usual and that's good because other aspects indicate that someone interesting is coming your way.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
It may seem as if you are at the mercy of events and all you can do is go with the flow but is that the right sort of attitude? You're a Capricorn. You're supposed to make things happen. Show you have not lost your leadership potential.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
It's not like you to be impulsive but you may well throw caution to the wind today. And why not? Tomorrow's Sun-Uranus link suggests you can do no wrong.

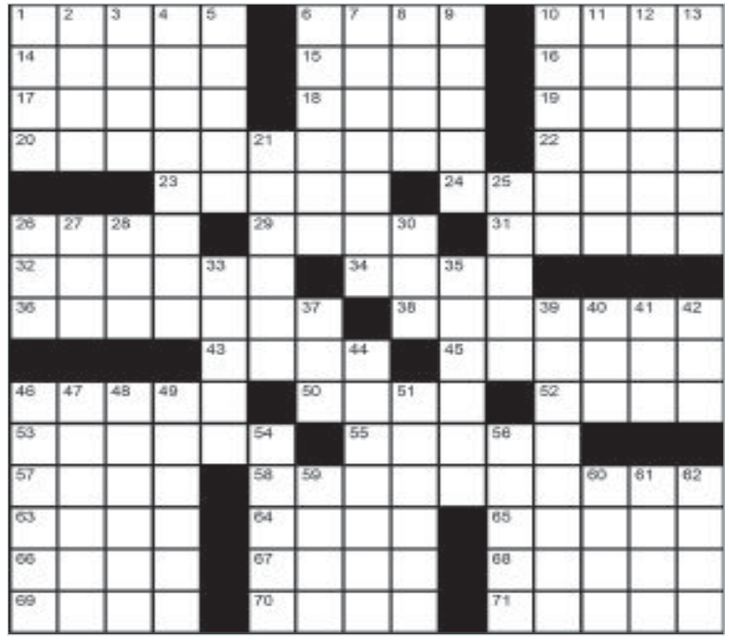
♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
This is one of the most important times of the year for you, especially if you are fed-up with who you are and what you are doing and wish to transform your existence. So, who do you want to be and where do you want to be?

SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

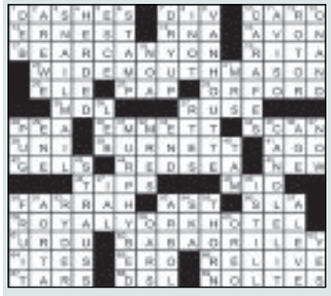
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. Squabbles
6. Canned meat
10. Dismal
14. __-on bag
15. Prefix to 'copter'
16. Ms. Olin
17. Once more
18. Designer Mr. von Furstenberg
19. Cdn. competition in 1972
20. Canadian snowboarding great/Olympian, Ross __
22. Honk
23. Polar Bear snacks
24. Odour-ous
26. Some cars
29. 'M' of Canadian writer L.M. Montgomery
31. Beneath
32. Opera legend Mr. Caruso
34. Has tea elegantly
36. Halifax: Mount Saint __ University
38. One of a cute "Star Trek" alien species
43. Just _ __ on the map
45. Bark (as of trees) in French
46. Thick tablets
50. "Star Trek: Deep Space Nine" character
52. Sure signs?
53. Environment
55. "Giant" (1956) ranch
57. Bodily structure, for short
58. Supported the vocalist: 2 wds.
63. Just in case...
64. __ d'Orsay, in Paris
65. Jargon
66. "General Hospital" role
67. Reverse
68. Small hill
69. Attention __
70. Collar type
71. Female fortune-teller of ancient times

Down
1. Boo-boo in Al Pacino's 1983 flick
2. Book leaf side
3. 'A' in UAE
4. Mesozoic Era's first period
5. J.M. __ (Irish playwright)
6. 1962 Tommy Roe tune
7. Winged horse
8. Bunches: 2 wds.
9. Cooper cars
10. __-free bread
11. Flipped the house
12. Footwear accessory
13. Self-sacrificer
21. Kingston-born Celtic singer, Mary Jane __
25. Billboard's concern
26. Mr. Bacon, to pals
27. Pasta suffix, often
28. Prince Valiant's son
30. 'Said' in Sherbrooke
33. Discontinue
35. Ready-made, commonly
37. Pull along
39. Michael __ ("Cityline" chef, a Judge on "MasterChef Canada")
40. William to Harry, for short
41. TV kind
42. Mr. cummings of poetry, et al.
44. Twister
46. The __ (Speed metal band Canadian country star Corb Lund was in)
47. Baseball order to bat
48. 1960 film for Canadian actor John Qualen, "North to __"
49. Werewolf series on Space
51. Part
54. From Sea to Sea: 'A Mari __ ad Mare', Canada's motto
56. Converses

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

Yesterday's Sudoku

8	2	1	3	7	9	4	6	5
7	6	3	4	1	5	9	2	8
4	9	5	6	8	2	7	1	3
6	3	2	8	9	7	1	5	4
5	8	7	1	4	6	3	9	2
9	1	4	2	5	3	8	7	6
3	4	6	7	2	1	5	8	9
1	5	8	9	6	4	2	3	7
2	7	9	5	3	8	6	4	1

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Wednesday
-13°/-14°
Variable
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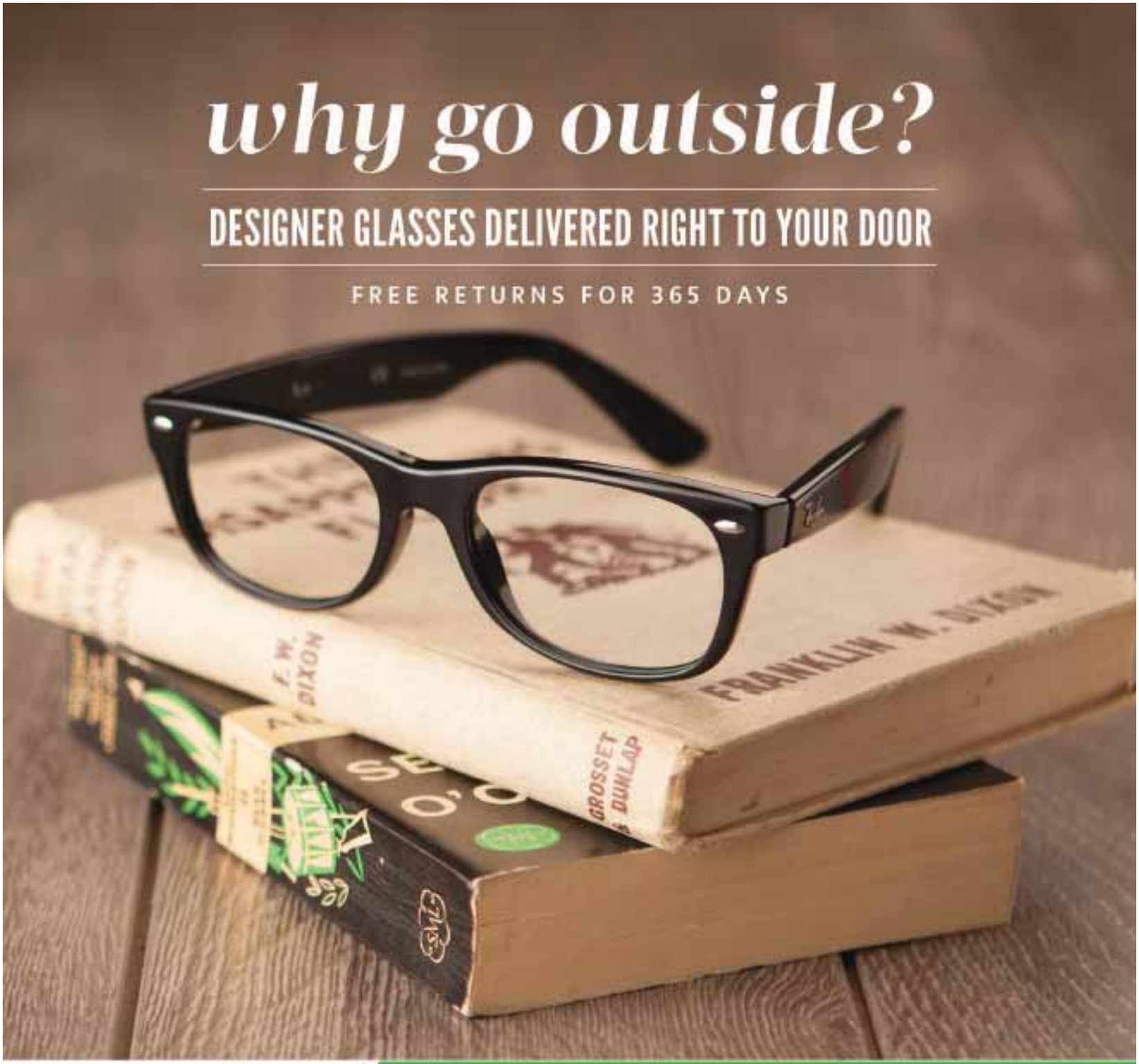
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